

2975 Laurel Street #20
San Diego, California 92104

July 23, 1988

Dear Shirley,

Thanks so much for taking time out of your very busy schedule to send me such nice birthday greetings. It was great to hear from you. Congratulations on your very successful dinner dance that raised \$700 for the church. I could use some of that energy in some of my fundraisers. Thanks for all the family news.

My hat's off to Tom for his work in the theatre. That's great! There is a part of me that always wanted to be involved in the theatre. I've always found a certain amount of excitement in the theatre and have always felt attracted to theatre people. Pat & Matt are taking me to the theatre tomorrow evening as part of a birthday treat.

And speaking of birthdays, I'm enclosing a number of items regarding my recent "birthday bash". Three friends, Nicole, Gary, and Barbara produced a birthday salute for me (brochure enclosed) with proceeds going to the Lesbian & Gay Archives of San Diego (not medical research). The party was well attended and over \$1200 was raised for the Archives.

Also enclosed you will note copies of newspaper articles from local gay publications that were done in conjunction with the celebration, and copies of commendations from various levels of government in California as well as (surprisingly) a proclamation from Mayor Maureen O'Connor declaring July 19, 1988 to be "Jess Jessop Day" in the City of San Diego. After what I told you about my relationship with the mayor, I'm sure that you can appreciate my surprise.

Pat & Matt, my next-door neighbor, and several former co-workers from Scripps Memorial Hospital were there to join in the festivities. There was an outrageous slide show--pictures of me from various events over the last 20 years from demonstrations to parades to speech making, to desert hikes, to raising flowers, and even a couple from a drag contest (and I don't mean an auto race). There was dancing, fine food, and live entertainment. It certainly was a fine tribute and a great evening.

Only 2 days later I was deeply saddened when a close friend, a man that I have grown to love since I met him last October in Washington, D.C. when we were arrested at the Supreme Court, died of complications of AIDS and diabetes. I knew that he was a diabetic and HIV antibody positive, but up until 2 weeks before his transition, George was asymptomatic. He was admitted to Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital with DKA, seemed to be recovering from that when he developed pneumocystis pneumonia, went into a coma and never recovered. George and I had worked on several projects together since Washington and I had become very attracted to his kind, gentleness and concern for others.

George was a bright man with a degree from Georgetown University who could have commanded a high salary in a mainstream job. Instead, he worked for minimum wage at the Gay & Lesbian Community Services Center in Los Angeles. Without exception, when people speak of George, the word "sweet" comes to their lips. I've lost many friends to AIDS over the last few years, but this one was

especially tough. George was just 27 years old.

I continue to do quite well, with the exception of frequent episodes of profound fatigue. I am committed to a holistic approach to living with AIDS and have been greatly influenced by Will Garcia and George Melton (see enclosed article). They are on a national speaking tour and I had a chance to spend some time with them when they were in San Diego a couple of weeks ago. It is hard to argue with their success and it is very inspirational to at last see some success in the struggle against AIDS.

Currently, I am reading a couple of books (Living With AIDS and Healing AIDS Naturally), meditating, seeing a massage therapist weekly, being very cautious about diet and rest. Two weeks ago my white count was down to 1800. I just had blood drawn again a couple of days ago to monitor that situation. If it goes much lower, I will discontinue the AZT, as it suppresses the white count.

I wish you and your family all the best. Hope you are surviving the summer OK. We've had 2 days of heat and humidity here and everyone is complaining. We are so spoiled. Keep in touch. Once again, thanks for your birthday wishes.

Love,

Bob